curtain on a stage full of noise, and lights, and revelry. When it went up again the stage was empty, desolate, with no light but a pale moon, and all sounds of life at a great distance—and then over the bridge came the wearied figure of the Jew. This marked the passing of time between Jessica's elopement and Shyloclc's return home. It created an atmosphere of silence, and the middle of the night.

" *You* came back without dropping the curtain/' said my daughter, [4]* and so it wasn't a bit the same/'

" I couldn't risk dropping the curtain for the business," answered the actor, " *because it needed applause to take U up again* \"

Henry Irving never grew tired of a part, never ceased to work at it, just as he never gave up the fight against his limitations. His diction, as the years went on, grew far clearer when he was depicting rage and passion. His dragging leg dragged no more. To this heroic perseverance he added an almost childlike eagerness in hearing any suggestion for the improvement o£ his interpretations which commended itself to his imagination and his judgment. From a blind man came the most illuminating criticism of his Shylock. The sensitive ear of the sightless hearer detected a fault in Henry Irving's method of delivering the opening line of his part:

" Three thousand ducats—well I "

" I hear no sound of the usurer in that/* the blind man said at the end of the performance. '* It is said with the reflective air of a man to whom money means very little."

The justice of the criticism appealed strongly to Henry.

He revised his reading not only of the first line, but of many other lines in which he saw now that Le had not been enough of the money-lender.

In more recent years he made one change in his dress. He asked my daughter—whose cleverness in such things